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DE RUEHTG #0459/01 1362054
ZNY SSSSS ZZH
O 152054Z MAY 08
FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8111
INFO RUEHMD/AMEMBASSY MADRID IMMEDIATE 0513
RUMIAAA/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL IMMEDIATE
RUMIAAA/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL//CINC/POLAD// IMMEDIATE
RUEAHND/CDRJTTFB SOTO CANO HO IMMEDIATE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEAWJA/DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC//DHO-5// IMMEDIATE
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHMFISS/DIRJIATF SOUTH IMMEDIATE
RUMIAAA/HQ USSOUTHCOM J5 MIAMI FL IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE 0742
RHMFISS/FBI WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHEHAAA/THE WHITE HOUSE WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUMIAAA/USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 04 TEGUCIGALPA 000459

SIPDIS

MADRID FOR HUGO LLORENS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [ECON](#) [SOCI](#) [KCRM](#) [ENRG](#) [EFIN](#)
SNAR, SMIG, MARR, MASS, MOPS, HO

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT JOSE MANUEL ZELAYA ROSALES: PERSONAL REFLECTIONS OF AMBASSADOR FORD REF: OFFICIAL BIOS ON FILE

Classified By: AMBASSADOR CHARLES A. FORD FOR REASONS 1.4 (b and d)

1. (S) Summary: Honduran President Jose Manuel &Mel8 Zelaya Rosales is a throwback to an earlier Central American era, almost a caricature of
2. (S) I have gotten to know Mel Zelaya quite well over my tenure as Ambassador, and offer these personal reflections on his character, his vi
3. (S) Personally, I have found Zelaya to be gracious and charming, quite willing to tell me whatever he thinks I want to hear at that moment.
4. (S) In the period May-June 2006, Zelaya pressed me hard to obtain President Bush,s approval of his plan to join PetroCaribe. When he met ir
- 5.(S) Not surprisingly, Zelaya has no real friends outside of his family, as he ridicules publicly those closest to him. In the days preceding
6. (S) Zelaya also has been quite erratic in his behavior. Despite his often harsh public rhetoric, such as describing U.S. immigration policy
7. (S) Zelaya remains very much a rebellious teenager, anxious to show his lack of respect for authority figures. Cardinal Andres Rodriguez ha
8. (S) There also exists a sinister Zelaya, surrounded by a few close advisors with ties to both Venezuela and Cuba and organized crime. Zelay
9. (S) Finally, Mel is very much a son of Olanchito, aware of his roots in the land and his family's ties to Honduras since the 1500,s. Unlike n
10. (S) I have found Zelaya,s real views of the United States hidden not too very deeply below the surface. In a word, he is not a friend. His
11. (S) Other behavior by the President confirms, in my view, the depth of his feeling. While Zelaya was open to our point of view of the sele
12. (S) More revealing, at public events with key officials present, Zelaya will make clear that anyone interested in becoming President of th
13. (S) Most noticeable to me has been his avoidance of public meetings with visiting US officials. Whether Cabinet officials or CODELs, Zelay
14. (S) Finally, Zelaya recently is fond of saying that we need to improve our communication, which I interpret to mean that we need to agree
15. (S) GOING FORWARD: The last year and a half of the Zelaya Administration will be, in my view, extraordinarily difficult for our bilateral
16. (S) We will need, in my view, to continue to engage Zelaya whenever we can in order to minimize damage and to TEGUCIGALP 00000459 004 OF C